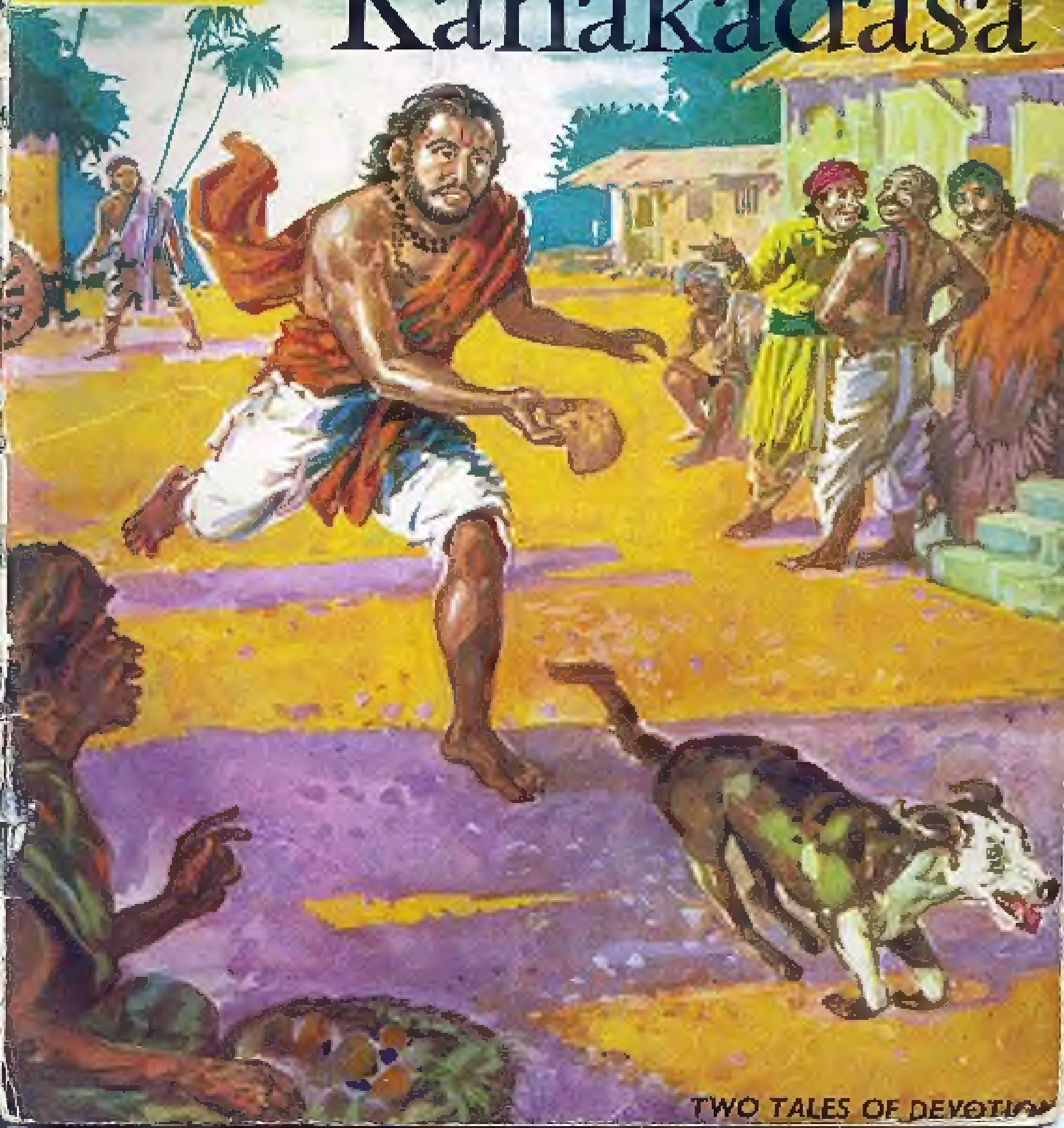




No.186 Rs 3.50

# Tiruppan and Kanakadasa



TWO TALES OF DEVOTION

Even as early as the time of the Buddha, Hinduism was already vitiated by the hierarchy (stratification) of the caste system. Orthodox Hindus felt that God would be defiled by the prayers offered by people belonging to the so-called lower castes and denied them the right to enter temples.

The caste system is still a blot on Hindu society despite the relentless campaigns carried on against it by enlightened social reformers and thinkers through the ages.

In the two tales recounted here, we have God Himself in the role of reformer, acknowledging the devotion of two lowly devotees, Tiruppan and Kanakadasa. The Lord's grace elevated both of them.

According to modern scholars, Tiruppan, the last of the twelve Alvars (Vaishnava saints), lived in Tamil Nadu in the 9th century; and Kanakadasa, in Karnataka, in the 16th century. Only ten Tamil verses of Tiruppan have come down to us. Though Kanakadasa is better known for his devotional songs in Kannada, he is also the author of three *kavyas* (long poems) on the lives of Krishna, Rama and Nala, and of a philosophical work, *Hari Bhakti Sara*. All four works were composed in Kannada.

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# TIRUPPAN

THE ROAD TO SRIRANGAM, THE HOLY CITY OF LORD RANGANATHA, WAS CROWDED WITH PILGRIMS WHO WERE ON THEIR WAY TO ATTEND THE FESTIVAL HELD THERE EVERY YEAR.

A CHILD HAD BEEN ABANDONED BY THE  
SIDE OF THE ROAD AND ITS PITEOUS  
CRIES MADE A FEW PILGRIMS PAUSE  
FOR A WHILE.

MOTHER, HE IS BEAUTIFUL!  
CAN WE TAKE HIM HOME?

HUSH. DON'T  
GO NEAR  
HIM!

DON'T  
TOUCH  
HIM!

FOR ALL WE KNOW  
HE MAY BE AN  
UNTOUCHABLE.

YES

AND THEY WENT ON WITH THEIR JOURNEY.

AT LAST A SWEEPER CAME BY.



HE PICKED UP THE CHILD ...



...AND TOOK IT TO HIS HOME ON THE OUT-SKIRTS OF THE CITY WHERE PEOPLE OF HIS COMMUNITY LIVED.



THE CHILD GREW UP UNDER THE LOVING CARE OF HIS FOSTER-PARENTS. THEY NAMED HIM TIRUPPAN.





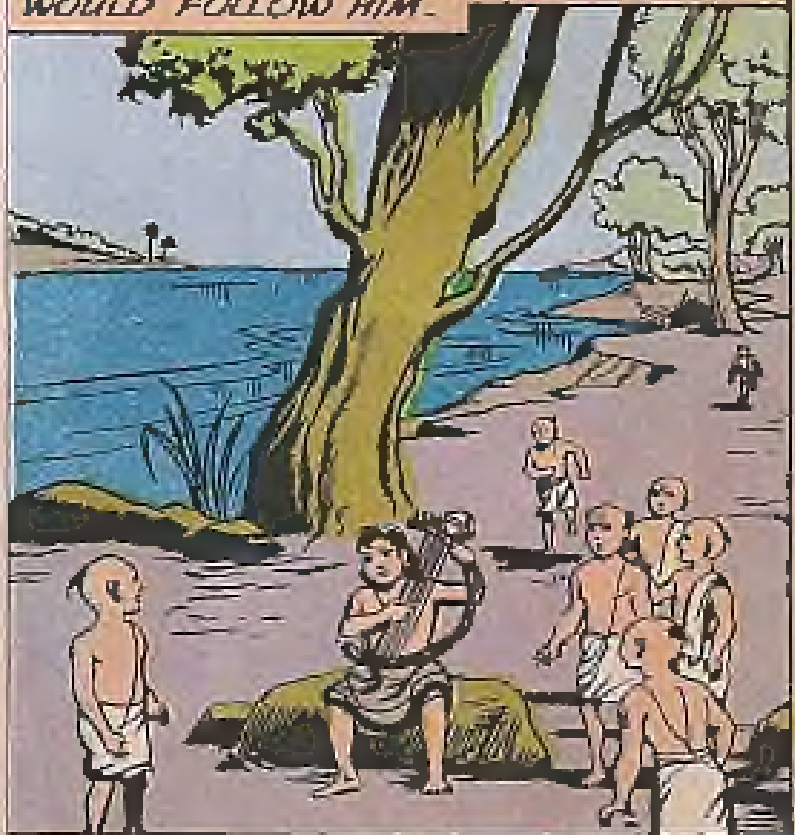
AFTER THE HARD DAY'S WORK, TIRUPPAN'S FATHER AND HIS RELATIVES USED TO GO HOME LATE IN THE EVENING. AFTER EATING A FRUGAL MEAL THEY WOULD ASSEMBLE TOGETHER AND SING SONGS, WHILE TIRUPPAN AND THE OTHER CHILDREN WOULD DANCE.



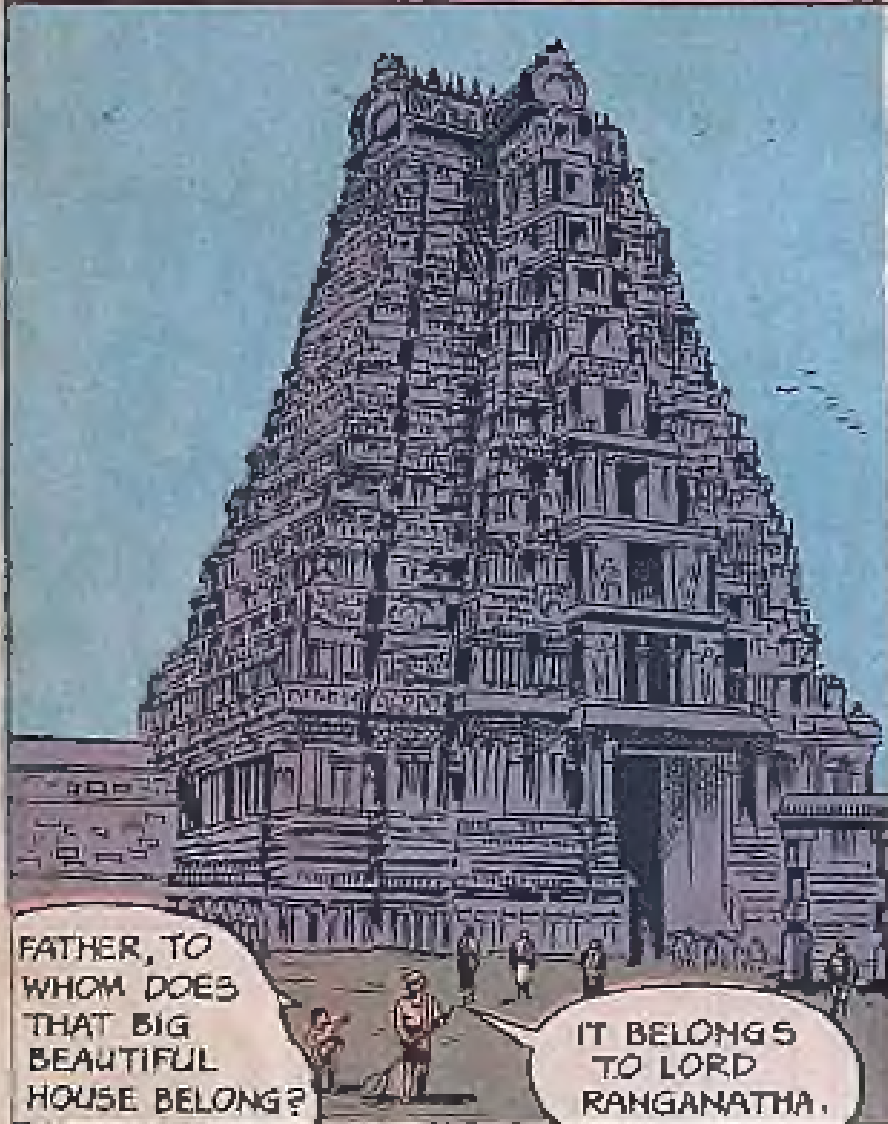
TIRUPPAN LEARNT TO PLAY ON THE YAL, WHICH IS A KIND OF STRINGED INSTRUMENT.



TIRUPPAN'S MUSIC WAS SO ENCHANTING THAT WHEN HE WENT OUT PLAYING ON THE YAL EVEN THE BRAHMAN BOYS WOULD FOLLOW HIM.



TIRUPPAN USED TO ACCOMPANY HIS FATHER WHOSE JOB IT WAS TO KEEP THE SURROUNDINGS OF THE TEMPLE CLEAN.



FATHER, TO WHOM DOES THAT BIG BEAUTIFUL HOUSE BELONG?

IT BELONGS TO LORD RANGANATHA.

MOTHER, WHO IS RANGANATHA? HE HAS SUCH A BIG HOUSE. IS HE A VERY RICH MAN?

THE WHOLE WORLD BELONGS TO HIM. HE IS THE FATHER OF ALL.



I WANT TO SEE LORD RANGANATHA. I WONDER WHAT HE LOOKS LIKE.



EARLY ONE MORNING, TIRUPPAN WENT TO THE TEMPLE.



HEY, STOP! HOW DARE YOU COME THIS FAR!

I WANT TO SEE LORD RANGA-NATHA.





TIRUPPAN, SINGING WITH A YAL IN HAND AND SURROUNDED BY A CROWD, BECAME A COMMON SIGHT IN SRIRANGAM.

THIS  
YOUNG BOY  
IS MAD!

BUT HE'S  
HARMLESS.

WHAT A SWEET  
VOICE HE HAS!

AND HIS  
SONGS ARE  
SO MOVING!

HIS FAVOURITE HAUNT WAS A CORNER ON THE BANK OF THE RIVER KAVERI FROM WHERE HE COULD CLEARLY SEE LORD RANGANATHA'S TEMPLE.

RANGANATHA, ALTHOUGH I AM  
NOT ALLOWED TO SEE YOU,  
I CAN AT LEAST SEE YOUR  
HOUSE FROM HERE.



**TIRUPPAN'S THOUGHTS WERE CONSTANTLY FIXED ON THE LORD.**

I WISH TO SEE LORD RANGANATHA. PERHAPS THE LORD HIMSELF IS LONGING TO SEE ME.



THESE PRIESTS HAVE MADE MY LORD A PRISONER. HE CAN'T SEE THOSE WHOM HE WANTS TO SEE.

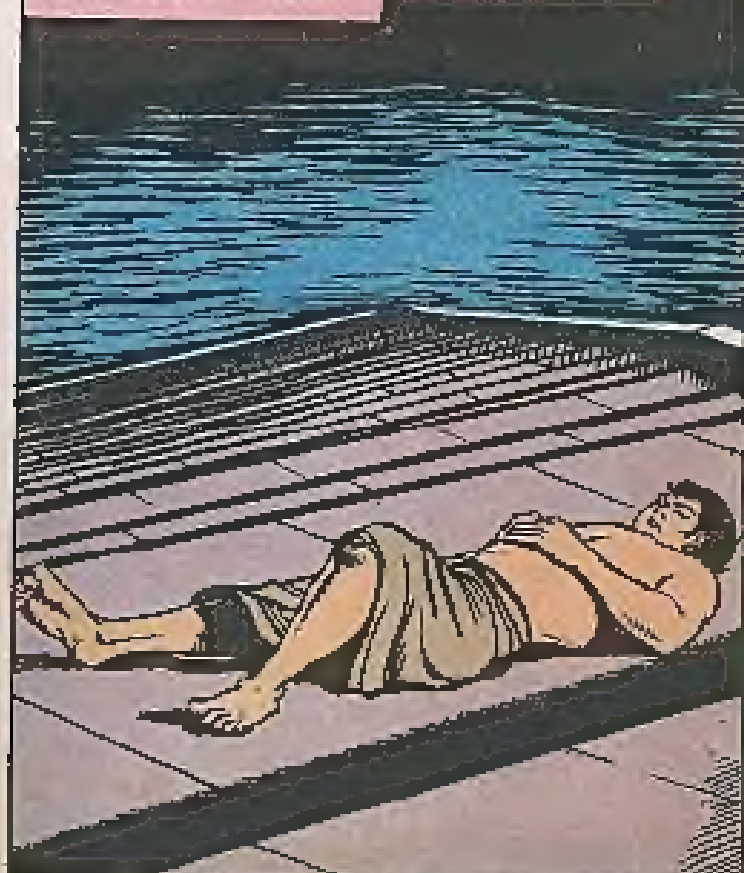


**ONE NIGHT TIRUPPAN BECAME DESPERATE.**

I WISH I WERE DEAD, LORD. WITH DEATH THE QUESTIONS OF BIRTH AND IMPURITY CEASE TO EXIST. NO ONE CAN SEPARATE US THEN.



**GRADUALLY A BLISSFUL SLEEP OVERCAME HIM.**



EARLY THE NEXT MORNING LOKASARANGA MUHI, A PRIEST, CAME THERE TO FETCH WATER FOR THE TEMPLE.



TIRUPPAN WAS FAST ASLEEP AND THE ANGRY WORDS OF THE PRIEST FAILED TO WAKE HIM.



THE PRIEST HIT TIRUPPAN ON THE HEAD WITH HIS STICK.



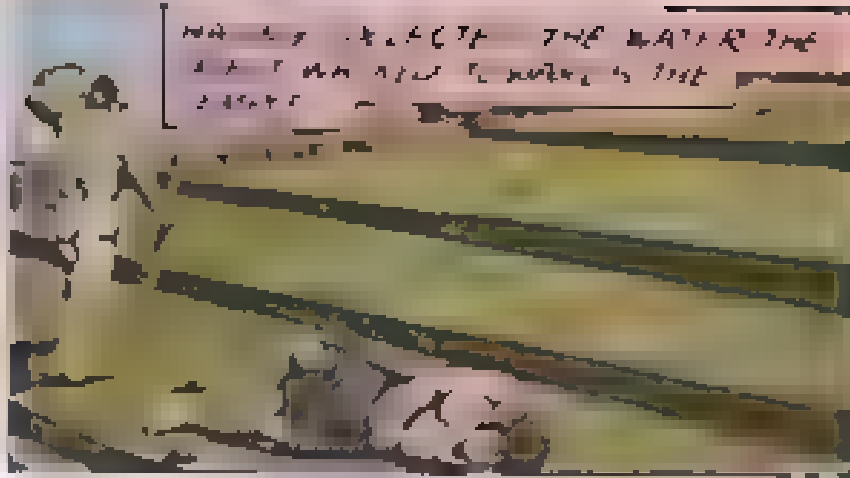
STILL SMOULDERING WITH ANGER, THE PRIEST SHOWERED A VOLLEY OF STONES ON POOR TIRUPPAN.



AT LAST HE HAST TURNED TO THE  
ONE FOR WHOM HE HAD COME

RANGANATHA, ON MY  
ACCOUNT THE PUJA  
WILL BE DELAYED  
TODAY. PARDON  
ME, LORD.

HE HAD EXPECTED THE WATER THE  
SACRIFICIAL PUJA TO BE  
BROUGHT



WHO HAD LOCKED  
HE THOUGHT  
PERHAPS IT WAS  
THE LOCKERIES



OPEN UP, SIR. THIS  
IS LOKASARANGA.  
I HAVE BROUGHT  
WATER FOR THE  
PUJA





LOKASARANGA, WHO ARE YOU TALKING TO?

S.R, I THOUGHT YOU WERE INSIDE THE SANCTUM SOMEONE HAS LOCKED THE DOOR FROM WITHIN



ALL JOINED TOGETHER AND PUSHED THE DOOR IN AN ATTEMPT TO FORCE IT OPEN

WHY DOESN'T IT OPEN? IT JUST CAN'T BE LOCKED FROM INSIDE



THE CHIEF PRIEST CALLED OUT

WHOEVER YOU ARE, OPEN UP I AM THE CHIEF PRIEST ASKING YOU TO OPEN THE DOOR.



THERE WAS NO ANSWER

MAYBE ONE OF US HAS INCURRED THE DISPLEASURE OF THE LORD AND THE LORD HIMSELF HAS CLOSED THE DOOR



THE CHIEF PRIEST WAS RIGHT, FOR JUST THEN A VOICE WAS HEARD FROM INSIDE.

LOKASARANGA HAS HURT ME BY HURTING MY DEVOTEE, TIRUPPAN UNLESS LOKASARANGA CARRIES TIRUPPAN ON HIS SHOULDERS AND GOES ROUND THE TEMPLE, THE DOOR WILL NOT OPEN.

WHAT A SINNER I AM! HURTING THE DEVOTEE OF THE LORD! PARDON ME, LORD.

LOKASARANGA WENT TO TIRUPPAN—

TIRUPPAN, PLEASE PARDON ME. COME TO THE TEMPLE LORD RANGANATHA IS CALLING YOU.

HAS MY LORD REALLY SENT FOR ME? I AM SO GLAD

COME ON, TIRUPPAN I WILL CARRY YOU THERE ON MY SHOULDERS

YOU, A PRIEST CARRYING ME, A SINNER? NO, YOU CAN'T DO THIS

YOU CAN'T SAY 'NO' TO THE LORD. IT IS HIS WILL

I DON'T UNDERSTAND.

WHEN LOKASARANGA APPROACHED THE SANCTUM WITH TIRUPPAN ON HIS SHOULDERS, THE DOOR OPENED OF ITS OWN ACCORD.

RANGANATHA! // TIRUPPAN, THE LORD HAS OPENED THE

HIS LORD. HE WAS OVERWHELMED.

TRANSCENDENT GOD, I DON'T WISH FOR ANYTHING ELSE. I AM COMING TO YOU.

CHITRA

A LIGHT LEFT THE BODY OF TIRUPPAN AS HE FELL AND ENTERED THE HEART OF LORD RANGANATHA. A TEMPLE DEDICATED TO TIRUPPAN WAS CONSTRUCTED NEXT TO THE TEMPLE OF SRI RANGANATHA. TO THIS DAY TIRUPPAN IS WORSHIPPED AS A SAINT.



# KANAKADASA



$H_0: \mu = 0$  vs  $H_1: \mu \neq 0$   $A = \{x: |x| > 1.96\}$   $P = 0.05$   $T = 1.96$   $1 - \alpha = 0.95$   $N = 100$   $n = 100$   $q_1 = 0.05$   $q_2 = 0.05$   $q_3 = 0.05$   $q_4 = 0.05$   $q_5 = 0.05$   $q_6 = 0.05$   $q_7 = 0.05$   $q_8 = 0.05$   $q_9 = 0.05$   $q_{10} = 0.05$

$\frac{d}{dt} \left( \frac{1}{2} m v^2 \right) = \frac{1}{2} m \frac{dv^2}{dt}$



\* IN KARNATAKA

...AND REACHED THE TEMPLE  
OF LORD VENKATESHWARA.



LORD TIMMAPPA! \*  
BLESS ME WITH  
A CHILD. I CRAVE  
FOR NOTHING  
ELSE

IN DUE COURSE BACHAMMA  
GAVE BIRTH TO A BOY

SUCH A LOVELY  
CHILD! WHAT WILL  
YOU NAME HIM?

HE WAS BORN BY  
THE GRACE OF LORD  
TIMMAPPA. WE WILL  
CALL HIM TIMMA



\* ANOTHER NAME FOR LORD VENKAT SWARA

LITTLE TIMMA WAS HELPFUL TO HIS FATHER. HE USED TO WATER THE SEEDLINGS

WITHOUT WATER THESE SEEDLINGS CAN'T SURVIVE, CAN THEY, FATHER?

YOU ARE RIGHT, TIMMA, THEY CAN'T

THEN THEY LIVE BECAUSE OF US, FATHER

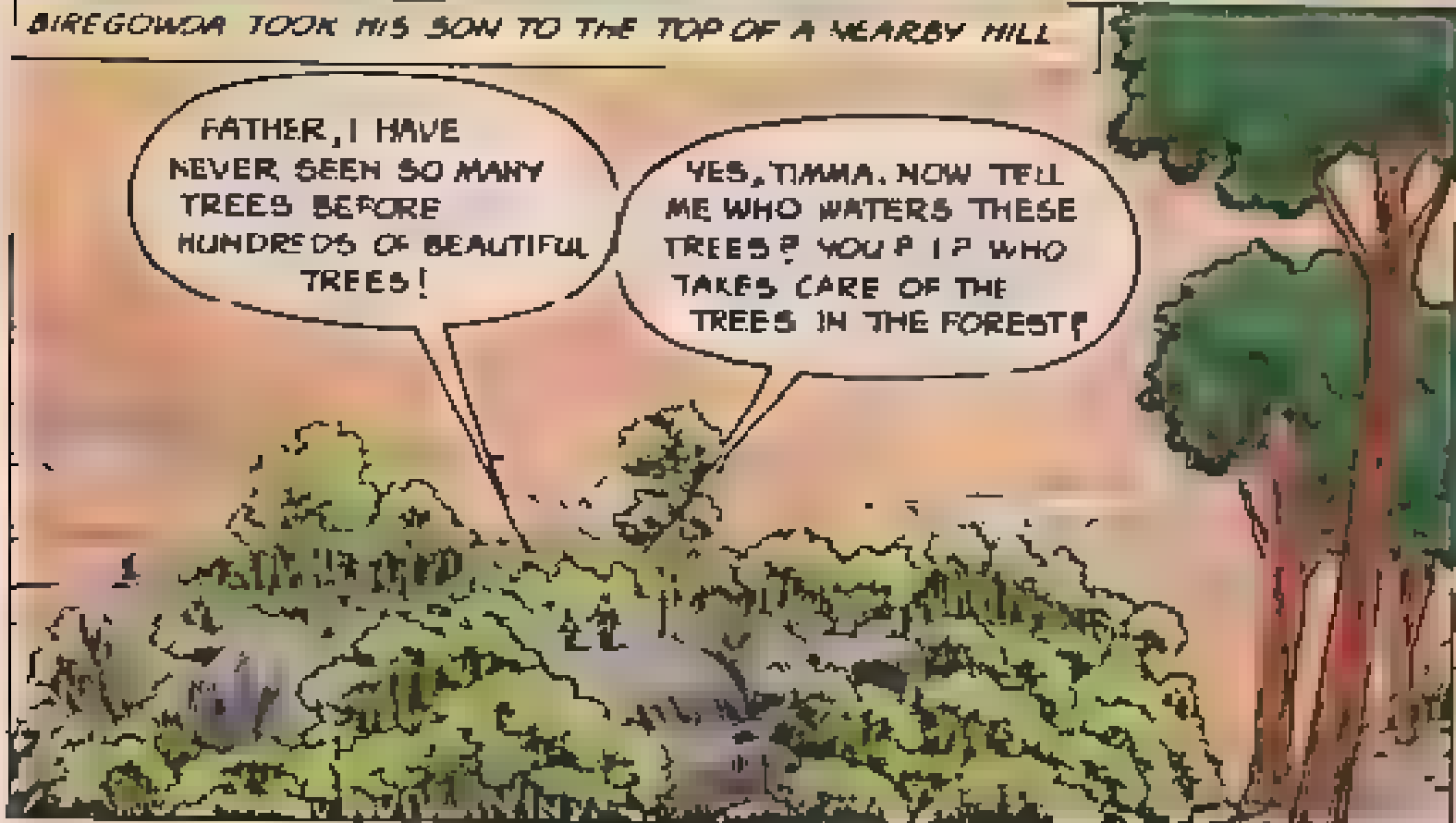
THERE YOU ARE WRONG, SON I WILL TELL YOU WHY.



BIREGOWDA TOOK HIS SON TO THE TOP OF A NEARBY HILL

FATHER, I HAVE NEVER SEEN SO MANY TREES BEFORE HUNDREDS OF BEAUTIFUL TREES!

YES, TIMMA. NOW TELL ME WHO WATERS THESE TREES? YOU P I ? WHO TAKES CARE OF THE TREES IN THE FOREST?





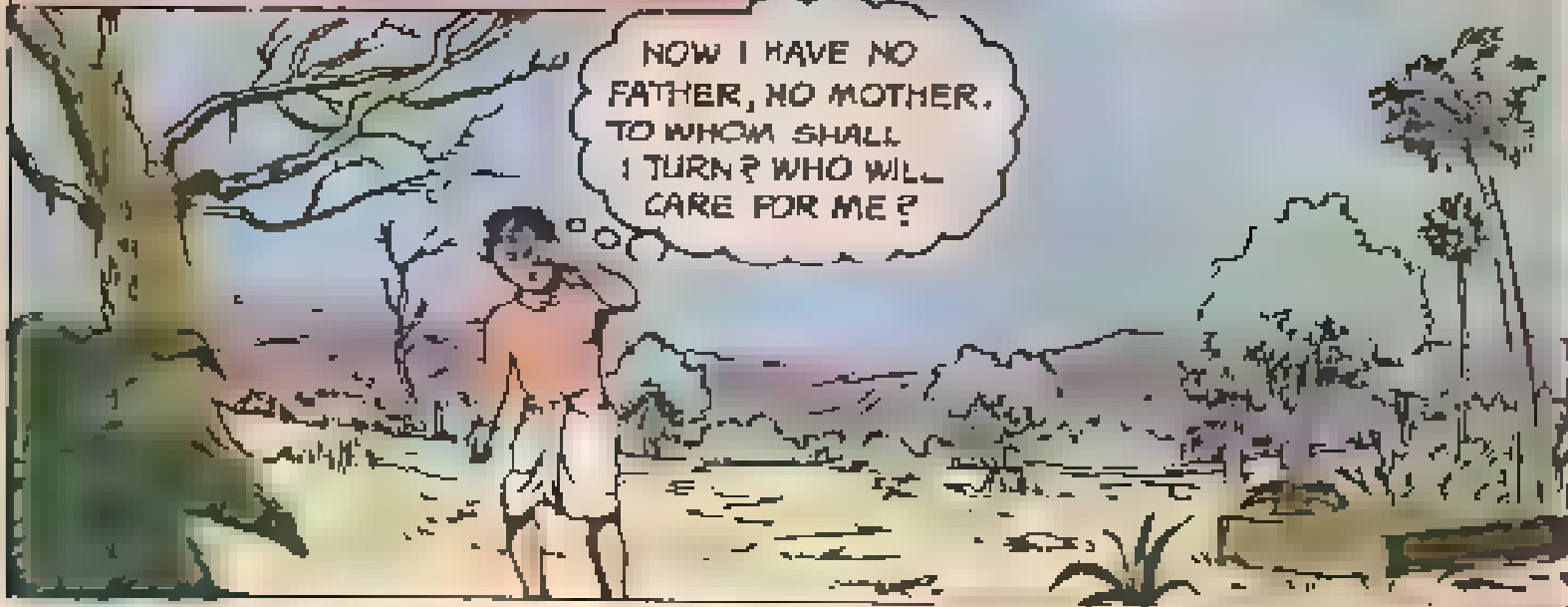
TIMMA'S FATHER DROVE HOME THE PROFOUND TRUTH.

YET THESE TREES WON'T PERISH BECAUSE THE KIND AND ALL-POWERFUL GOD IS THE PROTECTOR OF ALL



LATER, BOTH HIS PARENTS DIED.

NOW I HAVE NO FATHER, NO MOTHER. TO WHOM SHALL I TURN? WHO WILL CARE FOR ME?



AS TIMMA WALKED INTO THE BIG AND EMPTY HOUSE —



NO ONE AT HOME! I CAN'T LIVE ALONE. WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO ME? I AM SO AFRAID.

THEN THE WORDS OF HIS FATHER  
CAME BACK TO HIM IN A RUSH

WHO WATERS THESE TREES?  
YOU? I? WHO TAKES CARE OF  
THE TREES IN THE FORESTS?  
YET THESE TREES WON'T PERISH  
BECAUSE THE KIND AND  
ALL-POWERFUL GOD IS THE  
PROTECTOR  
OF ALL



NO, I AM NO  
LONGER AFRAID.  
GOD KESHAVA\*  
WILL PROTECT  
ME.

AS HE GREW UP TIMMA EXHIBITED QUALITIES  
OF LEADERSHIP INHERITED FROM HIS  
FATHER. AND AN IMPLICIT FAITH IN  
GOD HELPED HIM TO GROW UP  
FEARLESS. ONE DAY —

TIMMA, THESE PEOPLE  
ARE FROM THE  
NEXT VILLAGE.

WHAT CAN  
I DO FOR  
YOU?



WE ARE BEING  
MENACED BY A TIGER.  
THREE LIVES HAVE BEEN  
LOST SO FAR.

DON'T WORRY  
I WILL GO WITH  
YOU AT ONCE



IN THE FOREST —



TIMMA SHOT THE  
TIGER WITH HIS  
ARROW AND RID  
THE VILLAGE OF  
THE MENACE



ONE DAY HE WAS DIGGING IN  
THE BACKYARD OF HIS HOUSE.



WHEN HE OPENED THE BOX



THE NEIGHBOURS CAME TO SEE THE TREASURE.

SO MUCH KANAKA!

SINCE YOU FOUND THE KANAKA WE WILL CALL YOU KANAKA

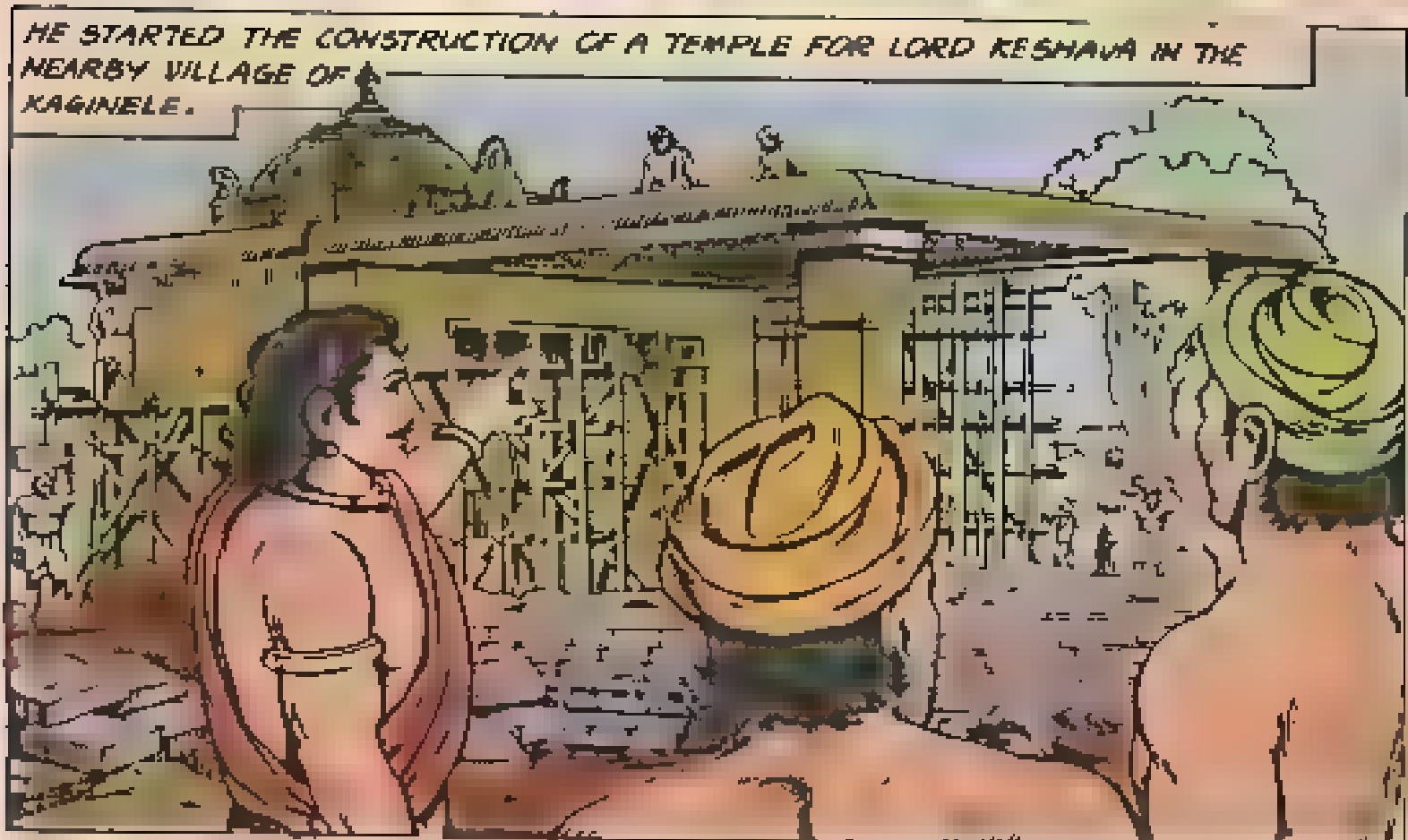


WHAT WILL YOU DO WITH ALL THIS GOLD?

WILL USE IT TO BUILD A TEMPLE, A HOUSE FOR GOD. IT WILL BENEFIT MANY PEOPLE



HE STARTED THE CONSTRUCTION OF A TEMPLE FOR LORD KESHAVA IN THE NEARBY VILLAGE OF KAGINELE.



HARDLY HAD THE TEMPLE BEEN COMPLETED WHEN HE WAS CALLED UPON TO TAKE PART IN A BATTLE. THE HEADMAN OF A VILLAGE NEAR BY WAS PREPARING TO ATTACK.

KANAKA, WE MUST GET READY FOR THE ENEMY.

THIS TIME WE WILL GIVE HIM SUCH A BEATING THAT HE WON'T DARE TO ATTACK US AGAIN.

LED BY KANAKA, THE YOUNG MEN OF THE VILLAGE WENT TO BATTLE WITH THE INVADER.



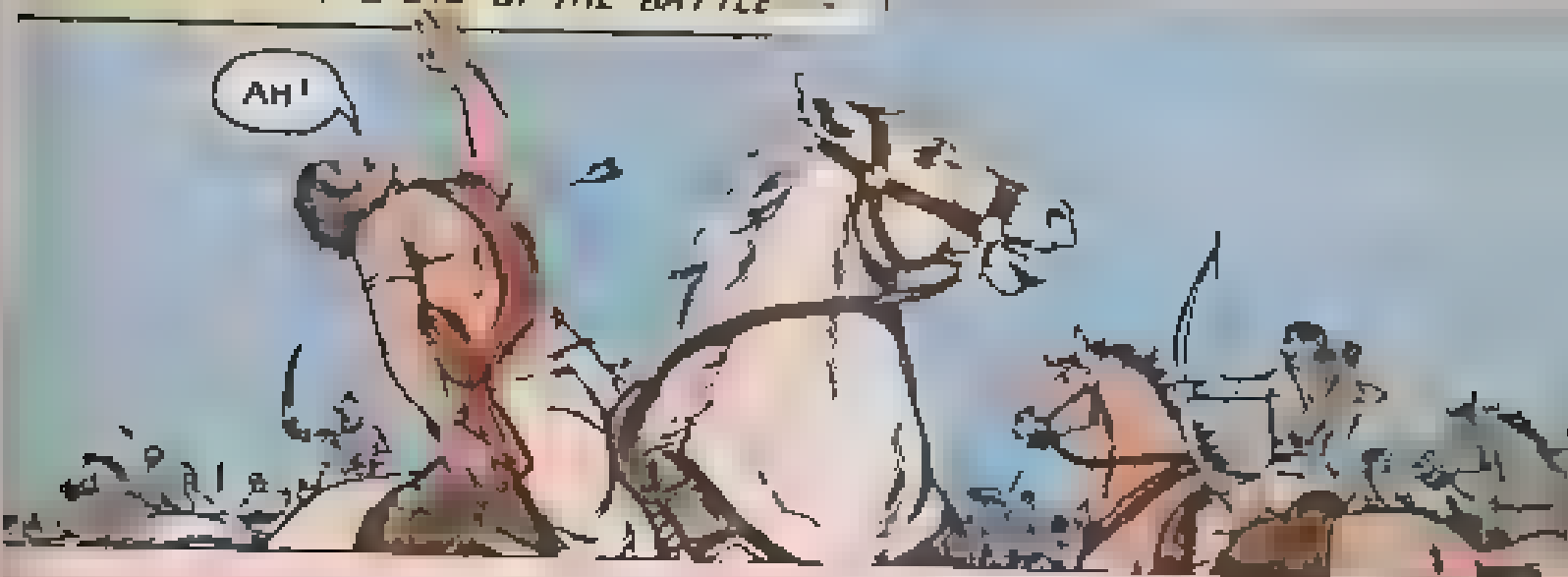
THEY FOUGHT FIERCELY.





BUT TOWARDS THE END OF THE BATTLE

AH!



BY DUSK THE BATTLEFIELD WAS DESERTED EXCEPT FOR THE DEAD AND THE WOUNDED

I AM... DYING | THIS... PAIN IS... UNBEARABLE, O KESHAVA... WON'T YOU COME TO MY HELP?



LORD KESHAVA RESPONDED TO HIS CRY FOR HELP

KESHAVA, YOU ARE SO KIND BY YOUR VERY PRESENCE MY WOUNDS HAVE HEALED. EXPERIENCE NEW STRENGTH, MY LORD.



KANAKA THEN MADE A DECISION THAT CHANGED THE COURSE OF HIS LIFE.

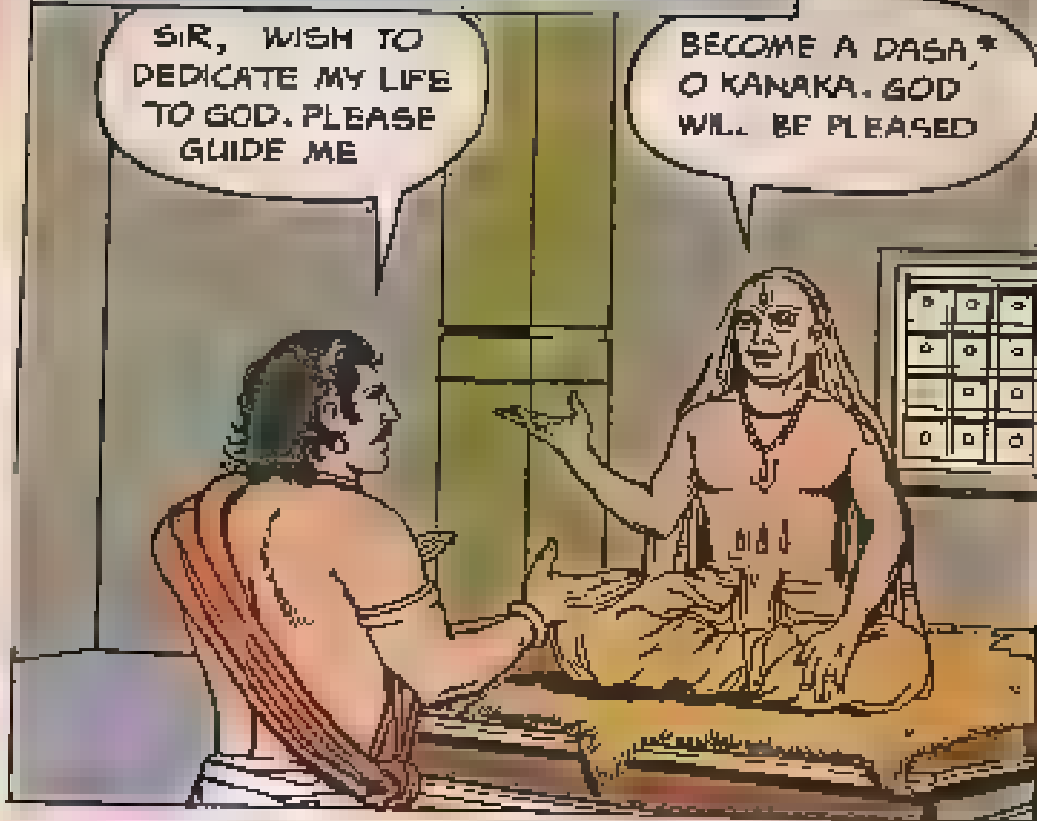
GOD BROUGHT ME BACK TO LIFE  
HEREAFTER I WILL  
DEVOTE MY LIFE  
TO HIS SERVICE.



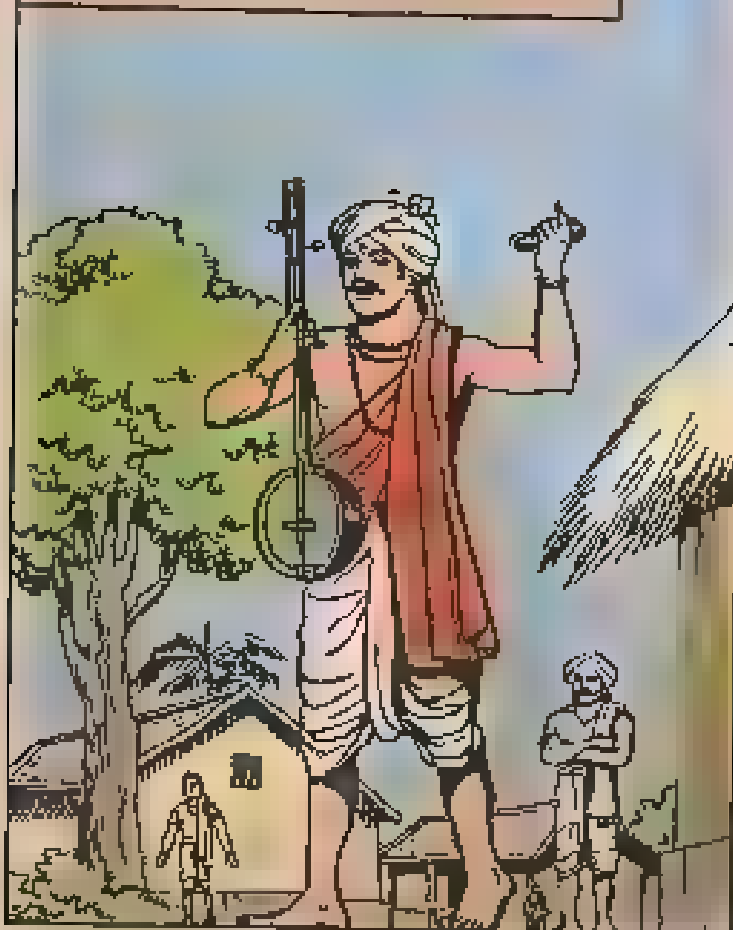
HE APPROACHED SAINT TATACHARYA.

SIR, I WISH TO  
DEDICATE MY LIFE  
TO GOD. PLEASE  
GUIDE ME

BECOME A DASA,\*  
O KANAKA. GOD  
WILL BE PLEASED



KANAKADASA, AS HE WAS NOW  
CALLED, WENT FROM ONE  
VILLAGE TO ANOTHER SINGING  
THE PRAISES OF THE LORD



\* SERVANT OF GOD

ONE DAY

HOW SERENE  
THIS BRAHMAN  
LOOKS! I WISH  
I TOO COULD  
MEDITATE.



WHEN THE BRAHMAN OPENED HIS EYES —

SIR, ACCEPT ME  
AS YOUR DISCIPLE  
AND TEACH ME  
A MANTRA\* TO  
MEDITATE UPON

BROTHER, A MANTRA  
SHOULD BE TAUGHT  
BY AN ACCOMPLISHED  
SAINT. GO TO SAINT  
VYASATEERTHA AND  
SEE IF HE WILL  
HELP YOU.

SAINT VYASATEERTHA WAS AT THE TIME SUPERVISING  
THE CONSTRUCTION OF A TANK IN HIS VILLAGE.

SIR, WE CAN'T  
REMOVE THIS  
ROCK. IT'S  
SO BIG.

THE WORK HAS  
BEEN HELD UP.

DON'T WORRY.  
GOD WILL SHOW  
US A WAY.

WHEN THE SAINT WAS THUS PREOCCUPIED, KANAKADASA APPROACHED HIM.

MASTER, I AM KANAKADASA,  
A SHEPHERD. TEACH ME  
A MANTRA UPON WHICH  
I CAN MEDITATE.

ON HEARING KANAKADASA'S PLEA, SAINT VYASEETERTHA WAS AMUSED

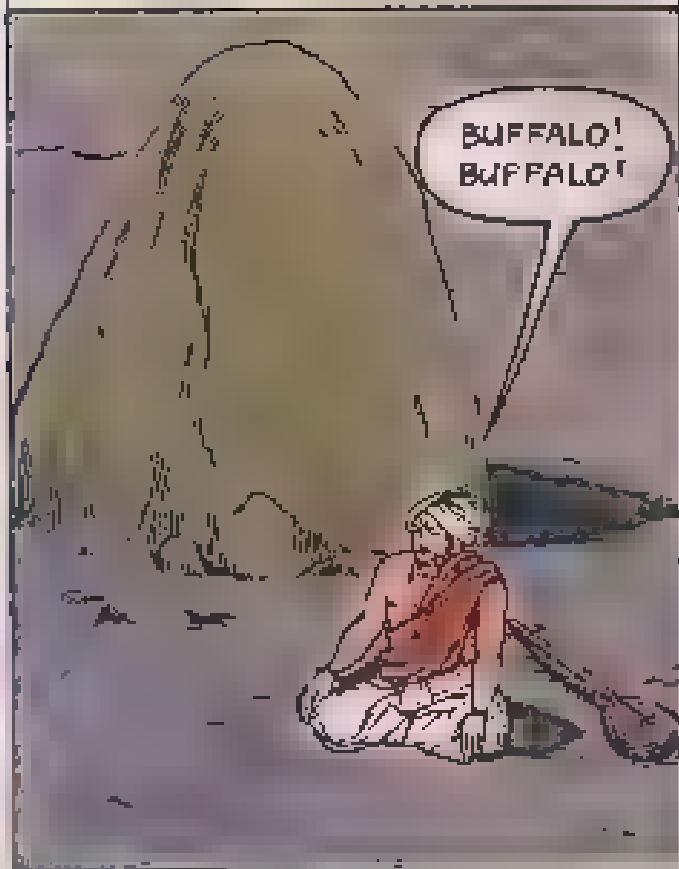
WHAT COULD A SHEPHERD MEDITATE UPON - SAVE, PERHAPS, SUCH A MANTRA AS "BUFFALO" ?

THANK YOU, S R



SITTING BESIDE THE ROCK, KANAKADASA BEGAN TO MEDITATE

BUFFALO! BUFFALO!

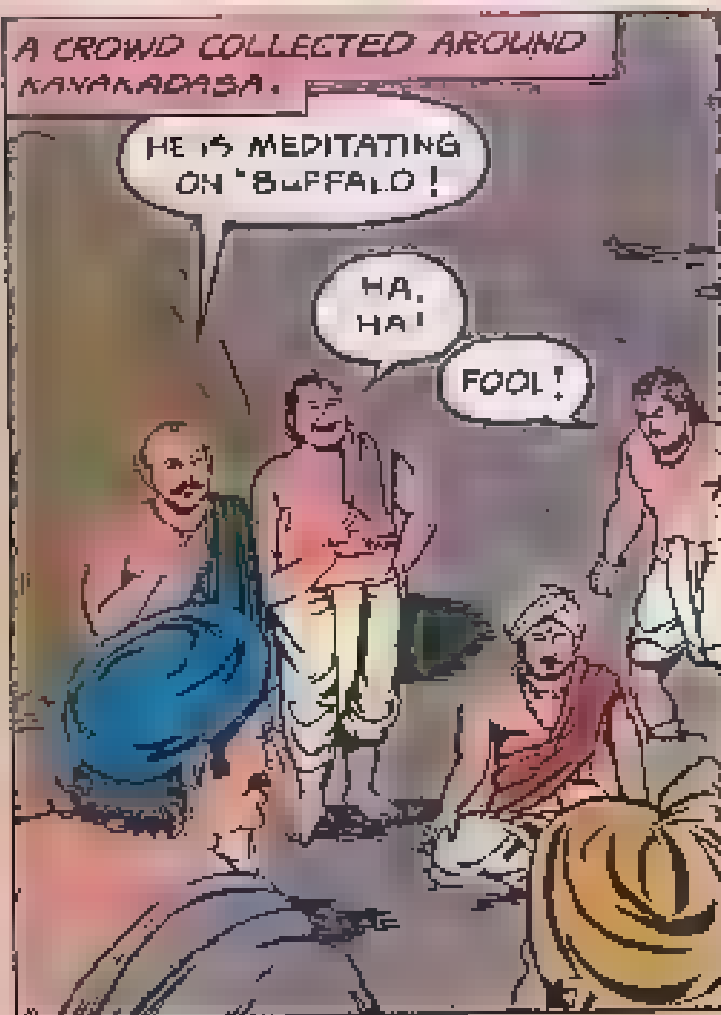


A CROWD COLLECTED AROUND KANAKADASA.

HE IS MEDITATING ON "BUFFALO"!

HA, HA!

FOOL!



SUDDENLY A BUFFALO APPEARED.

IT IS YAMA'S BUFFALO!

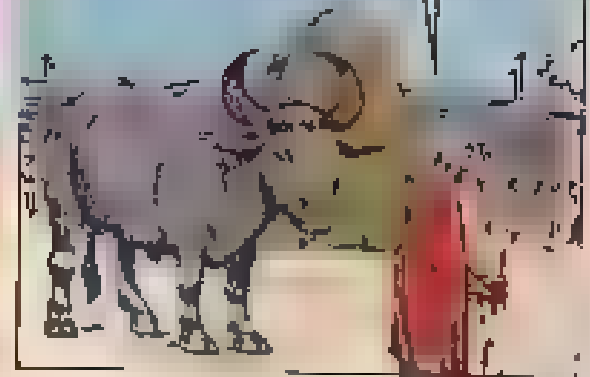
RUN!



HERE IS THE  
BUFFALO INVOKED BY  
THE MANTRA WHAT  
WOULD YOU LIKE  
HIM TO DO ?

GET YOUR BUFFALO  
TO REMOVE THE  
ROCK WHICH IS  
HINDERING OUR  
WORK

O VEHICLE OF YAMA,  
PLEASE FULFIL THE  
WISH OF THE MASTER.



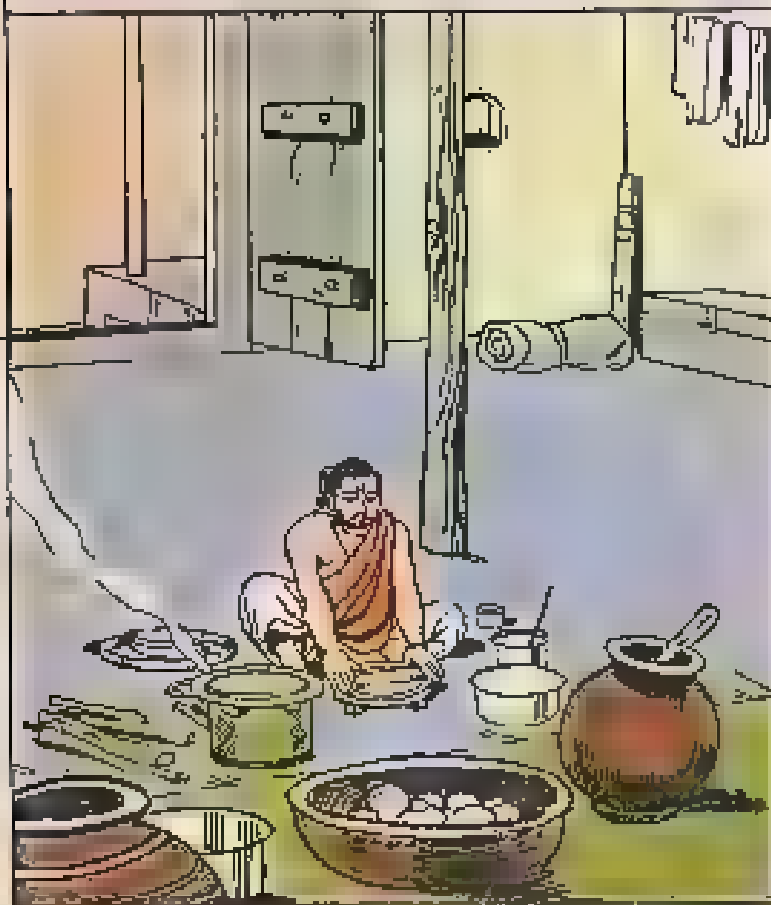
SOME DAYS LATER —

THANKS TO  
KANAKA, THE TANK  
HAS BEEN  
COMPLETED.

FAITH CAN  
MOVE EVEN  
MOUNTAINS!  
BLESSED IS  
KANAKA



ONE DAY WHEN KANAKA WAS COOKING



.. A STREET DOG CAME IN AND PICKED UP A ROTI.\*



WHEN KANAKA TURNED SUDDENLY, THE FRIGHTENED DOG DROPPED THE ROTI...



..AND RAN OUT



\* UNLEAVENED BREAD

KANAKA RAN AFTER THE DOG, WHILE THE PEOPLE ON THE STREET WATCHED THE STRANGE SIGHT.

COME BACK  
AND TAKE  
THIS



WHY DID YOU  
RUN AFTER THE  
DOG, KANAKA?

GOD CAME TO MY  
HOUSE, AND WENT  
AWAY WITHOUT  
ACCEPTING THE  
ROT



HA, HA!

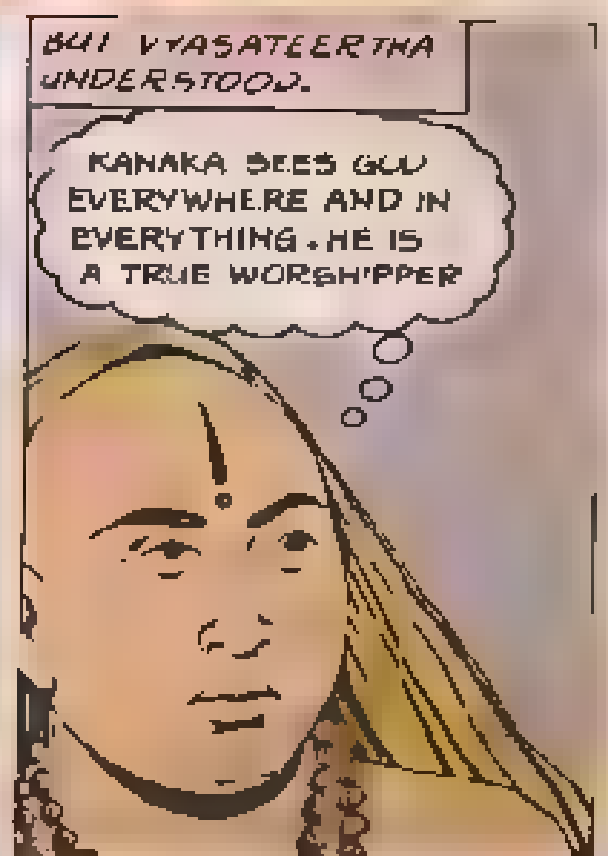
HA HA! KANAKA  
SAY A DOG,  
GOD

HE IS  
MAD



BUT VYASATEERTHA  
UNDERSTOOD.

KANAKA SEES GOD  
EVERYWHERE AND IN  
EVERYTHING. HE IS  
A TRUE WORSHIPPER



KANAKA BECAME THE FAVOURITE DISCIPLE OF VYASATEERTHA THE OTHER DISCIPLES SOON BECAME JEALOUS OF HIM

HE DOESN'T  
KNOW THE  
SCRIPTURES

HE IS OF  
LOW BIRTH  
A SHEPHERD

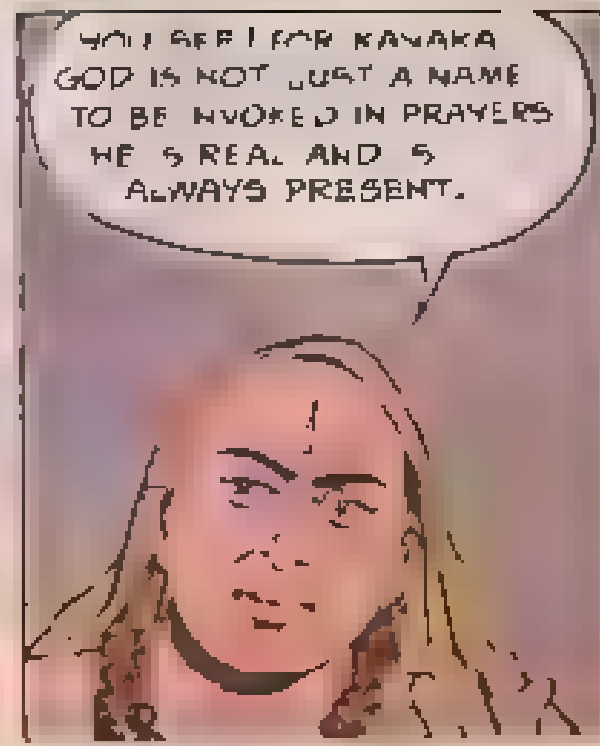
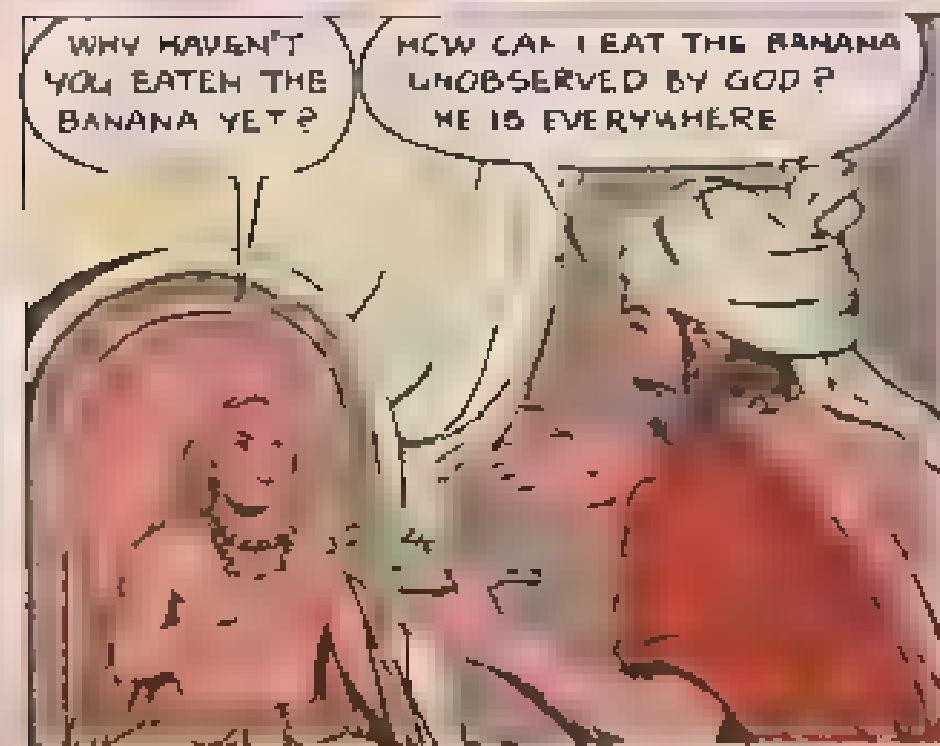
YET HE IS  
OUR MASTER'S  
FAVOURITE

VYASATEERTHA WAS AWARE OF HOW HIS DISCIPLES FELT  
HE CALLED THEM AND GAVE THEM EACH A BANANA

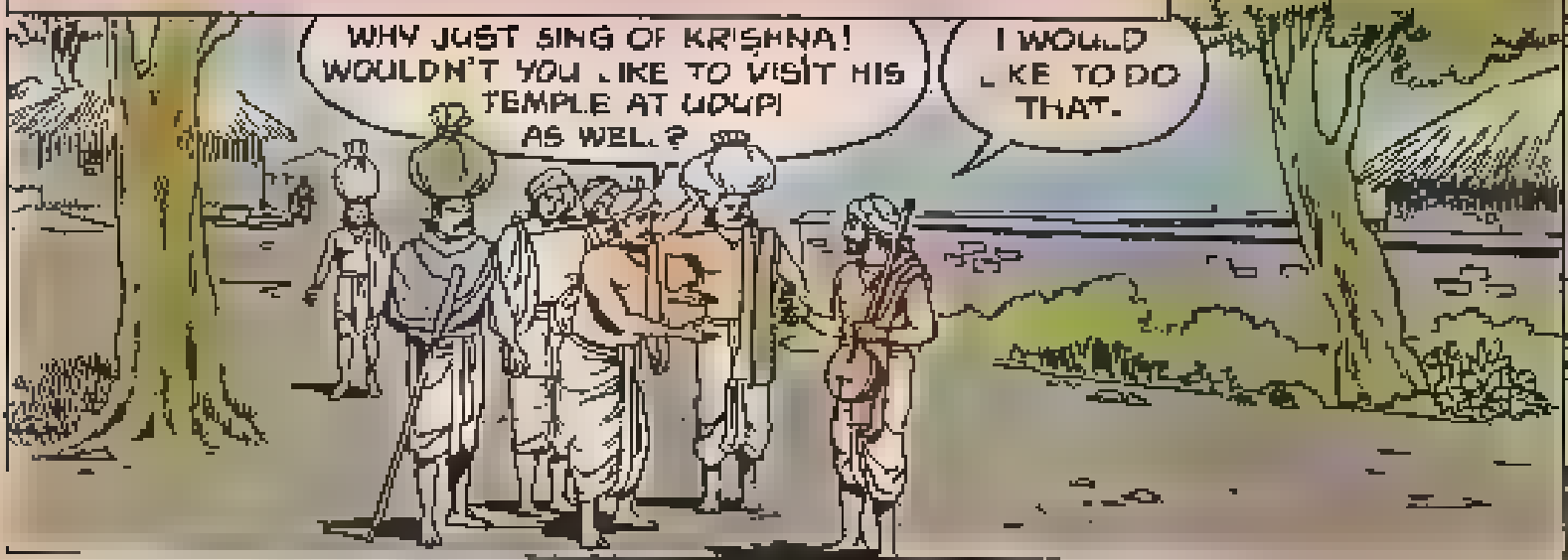
I WILL SHOW THE  
DIFFERENCE BETWEEN  
KANAKA AND THE OTHERS

GO TO SOME  
SECLUDED SPOT AND  
EAT THIS SACRED  
BANANA, UNOBSERVED  
BY ANYONE

HIS DISCIPLES RAN IN DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS

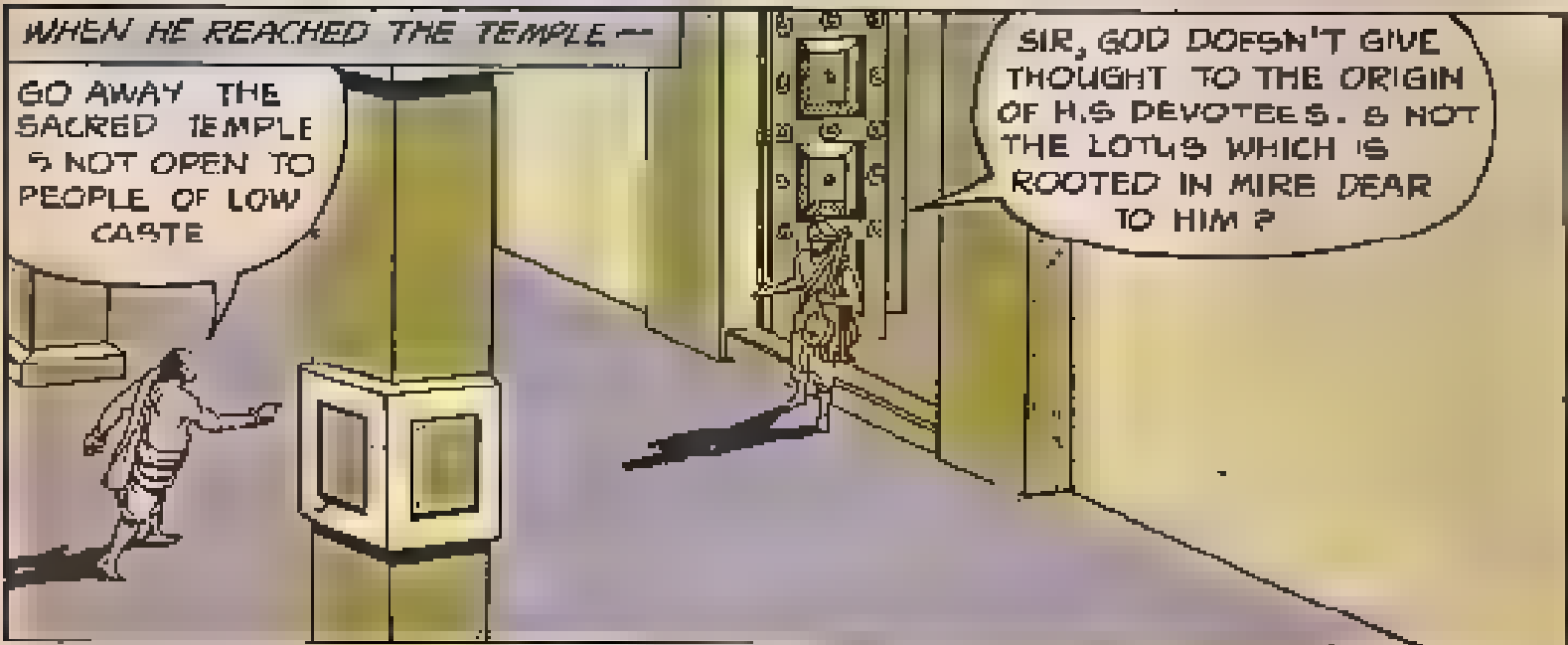


SOON AFTER THIS INCIDENT, KANAKA LEFT HIS GURU AND STARTED ROAMING FROM VILLAGE TO VILLAGE SINGING ABOUT THE GLORY OF GOD. ONE DAY, HE MET A GROUP OF PILGRIMS WHO WERE ON THEIR WAY TO UDUPI

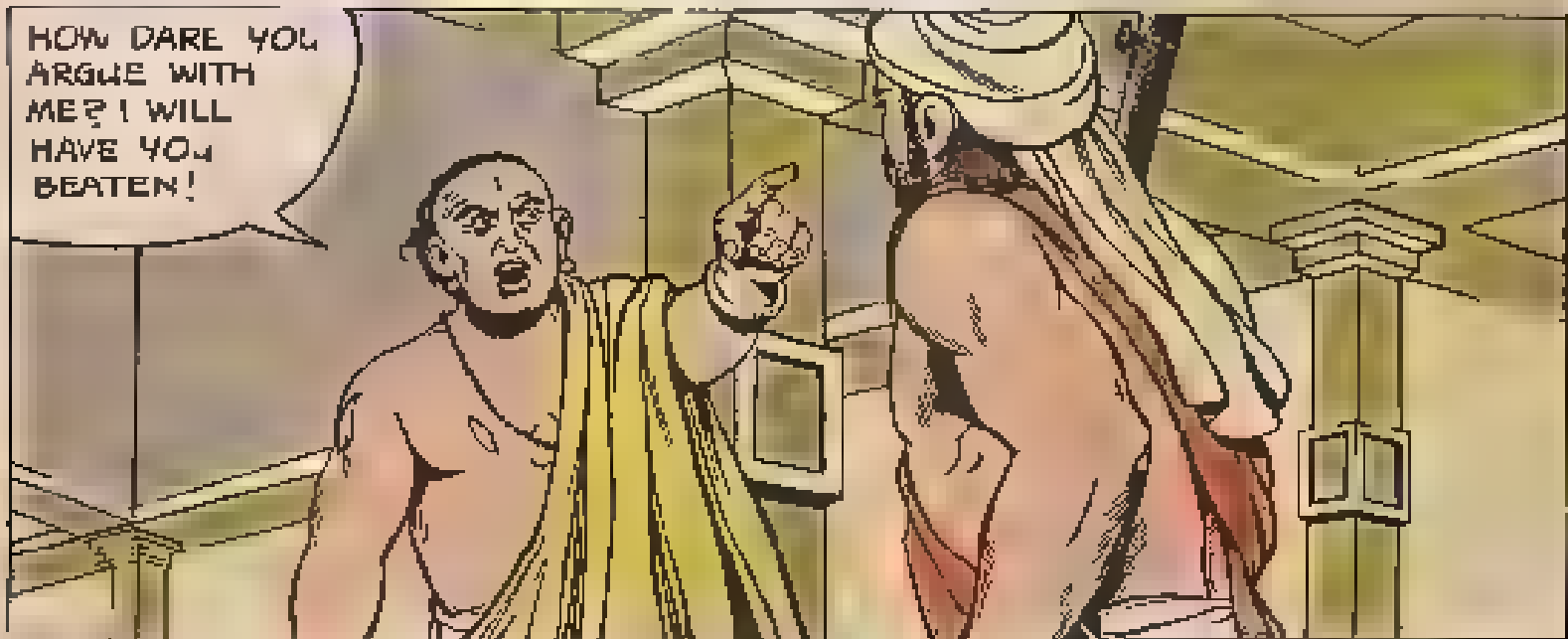


WHEN HE REACHED THE TEMPLE --

GO AWAY THE SACRED TEMPLE IS NOT OPEN TO PEOPLE OF LOW CASTE



HOW DARE YOU ARGUE WITH ME? I WILL HAVE YOU BEATEN!





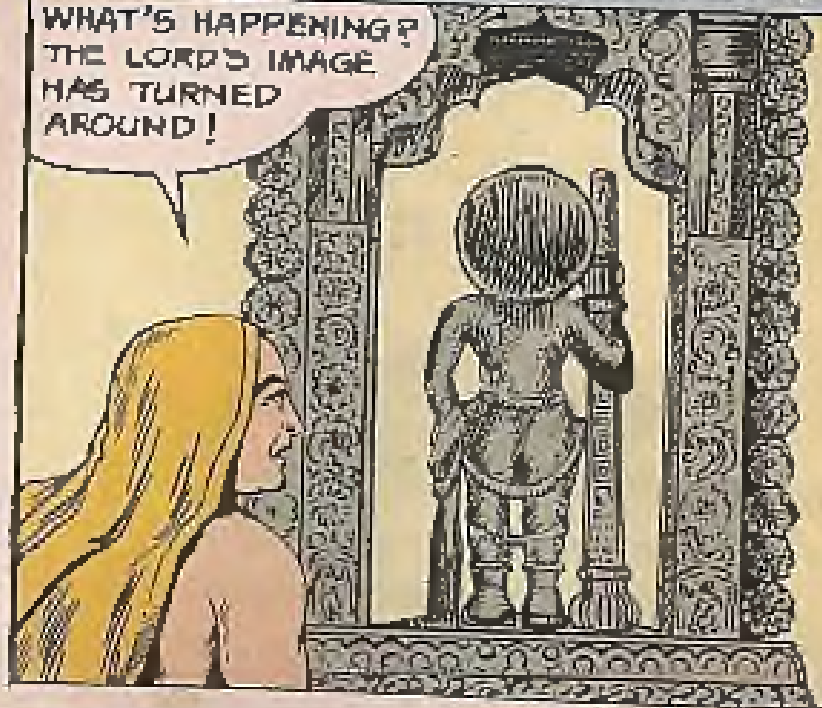
KANAKA WENT BEHIND THE TEMPLE.

OPEN THE DOOR TO ME, KRISHNA! CAN'T YOU HEAR MY PLEAS?



A STRANGE THING HAPPENED IN THE SANCTUM. WHERE SHRI VADIRAJA TEERTHA, THE ACHARYA\*, WAS WORSHIPPING THE LORD.

WHAT'S HAPPENING? THE LORD'S IMAGE HAS TURNED AROUND!



THE ACHARYA HURRIED TO THE BACK OF THE TEMPLE AND SAW AN OPENING IN THE WALL THROUGH WHICH KANAKA WAS ABLE TO HAVE A GLIMPSE OF THE DEITY.

BLESSED ARE THE PURE IN HEART!

KRISHNA, YOU ARE KIND AND MERCIFUL.



LATER, A WINDOW WAS BUILT WHERE THE OPENING HAD APPEARED. TO THIS DAY, DEVOTEES VISITING UDUPI HAVE A GLIMPSE OF THE LORD THROUGH THE WINDOW WHICH HAS BECOME FAMOUS AS "KANAKA'S WINDOW". HIS DEVOTIONAL SONGS CONTINUE TO BE SUNG ALL OVER KARNATAKA THOUGH FOUR HUNDRED YEARS HAVE PASSED SINCE HE DIED.


\* HEAD OF A RELIGIOUS INSTITUTION

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